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The Children's Hour Theme of Power of Gossip Still Fresh Today

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The Children's Hour Theme of Power of Gossip Still Fresh Today

Quick Facts

- Written by playwright Lillian Hellman, this serious and adult play concerns two women - Karen Wright (Ann Marie Calabro of Greenville, S.C.) and Martha Dobie (Cecily Bigham of Merriam, Mass.) - who run a boarding school for girls.
- Performances are Wednesday, March 28-Saturday, March 31 at 8 p.m. and Saturday, March 31 and Sunday, April 1 at 2 p.m. in Johnson Studio Theatre.

ROCK HILL, S.C. – Winthrop University's [Department of Theatre and Dance](#) will present “**The Children’s Hour**,” a play that provides a powerful example of the destruction that lies can cause, March 28-April 1.

Written by playwright [Lillian Hellman](#), this serious and adult play concerns two women - **Karen Wright** (Ann Marie Calabro of Greenville, S.C.) and **Martha Dobie** (Cecily Bigham of Merriam, Mass.) - who run a boarding school for girls. After **Mary Tilford** (Julia Benfield of Fort Mill, S.C.) starts a rumor about the two women, scandal erupts.

As the young girl comes to understand the power she wields with her lies, she destroys the lives of the two women. It is soon discovered that the gossip was pure invention, but it is too late. The damage has been done and life for all involved will never be the same.

The play was adapted for the big screen in 1961 and starred **Audrey Hepburn** (as Karen Wright) and **Shirley MacLaine** (as Martha Dobie). It was nominated for five Academy Awards.

“The Children’s Hour is one of Lillian Hellman’s greatest yet most controversial works. Eighty-eight years after it first opened on Broadway, the play’s subject matter and theme of the destructive power of gossip is still as fresh as the front page of today’s newspaper,” said Russell Luke, the play’s director and adjunct professor of theatre. “I have especially enjoyed working with such a talented cast and designers. I have watched the actors come so far in the past few weeks and I believe the audience will be impressed. I have also enjoyed working with student lighting, costume and sound designers. We have a talented group of theatre design majors,” Luke added.

Performances are Wednesday, March 28-Saturday, March 31 at 8 p.m. and Saturday, March 31 and Sunday, April 1 at 2 p.m. in [Johnson Studio Theatre](#).

Tickets are \$8 with Winthrop ID and \$15 general admission. Tickets may be purchased online, by calling the box office at 803/323-4014 or by e-mailing boxoffice@winthrop.edu.

For more information, please contact the [Department of Theatre and Dance](#) at 803/323-2287.

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